

LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, AND TRANSGENDER PRIDE MONTH

2015



LGBT Pride Month

Diversity is one of our nation's greatest strengths. During Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Pride month, we celebrate our rich diversity and renew our enduring commitment to equity.



LGBT Pride Month

The dedication and contributions of our Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual (LGB) service members and Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender (LGBT) civilians have had immeasurable impact on our National Security and the Department of Defense (DoD).



LGBT Pride Month



Our nation was founded on the principle that the individual has infinite dignity and worth. The DoD, which exists to keep the nation secure and at peace, must always be guided by this principle.

In all that we do, we must show respect for the serviceman, the servicewoman, the civilian employee, and family members, recognizing their individual needs, aspirations, and capabilities.

LGBT Pride Month

This presentation acknowledges the painstaking labor of Americans—sung and unsung—whose personal sacrifices and determination were instrumental in the struggle for civil rights.

LGBT Pride Month

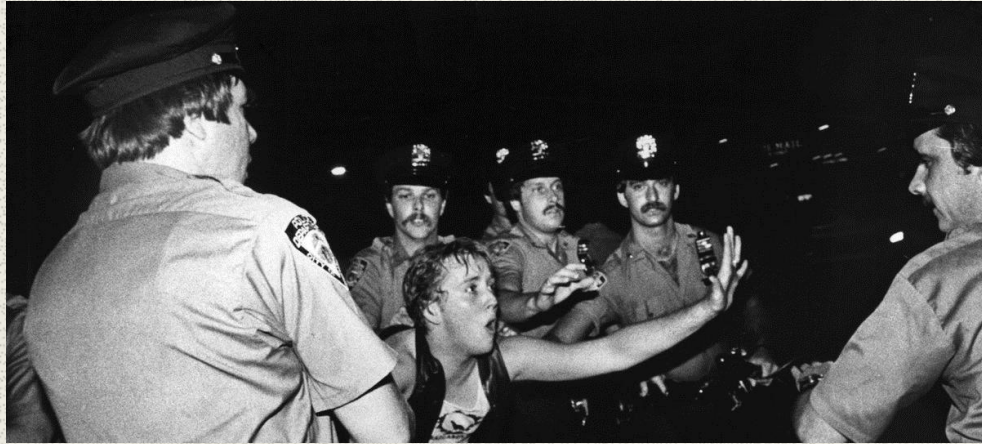
On June 2, 2000, President Clinton issued Proclamation No. 7316 for the first Gay and Lesbian Pride Month. *“This June, recognizing the joys and sorrows that the gay and lesbian movement has witnessed and the work that remains to be done, we observe Gay and Lesbian Pride Month and celebrate the progress we have made in creating a society more inclusive and accepting of gays and lesbians.”*

LGBT Pride Month



June was selected as Pride month to commemorate the events of that month in 1969, known as the Stonewall riots—an event that lasted three days.

LGBT Pride Month



Patrons and supporters of the Stonewall Inn in Greenwich Village, New York, resisted police harassment of the LGBT community.

The Stonewall riots were recognized as the catalyst for the Gay Liberation movement in the United States.

LGBT Pride Month

The struggle for civil rights in the LGBT community actually began much earlier.

Dr. Frank E. Kameny fought for gay rights more than a decade before the Stonewall riots. He served in World War II, and later as a civil service astronomer with the U.S. Army Map Service.



LGBT Pride Month

According to the Library of Congress, Kameny was fired and banned from federal employment in 1957 because he was gay.



Not only was he released, but more than 10,000 gay and lesbian employees were forced out of their jobs during the 1950s and 1960s.

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He decided to sue and lost. He appealed and lost again. He brought the first civil rights action regarding sexual orientation to the Supreme Court of the United States, arguing that the government's actions toward gays were “*an affront to human dignity.*”

The Court denied his petition. He persevered and continued to fight for civil rights for 18 years, until the U.S. Civil Service Commission reversed its policies excluding homosexuals from government employment.

LGBT Pride Month

Fifty years after he was fired, the U.S. Civil Service Commission issued Kameny a formal apology for being fired solely on the basis of his sexual orientation.



Before his death in 2011, he said, *“All I can say is from the long view, 50 years, we have moved ahead in a way that would have been absolutely unimaginable back then.”*

LGBT Pride Month

Technical Sergeant Leonard P. Matlovich was a Vietnam War veteran, voluntarily serving three combat tours, and later as a military race relations instructor. He earned the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star.

He was also the first gay service member to purposely out himself, to challenge the ban on homosexuals in the military.



LGBT Pride Month

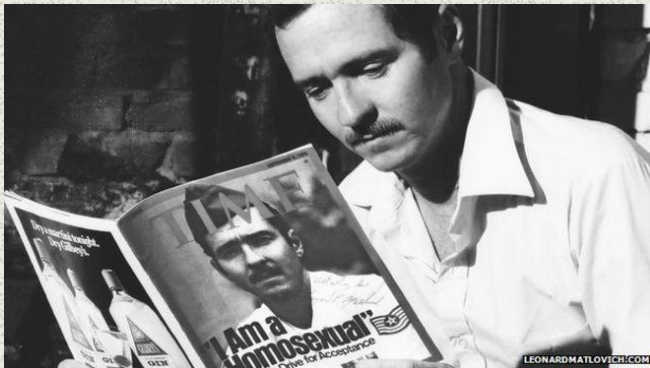
Matlovich wrote a letter to his commanding officer, revealing his homosexuality and asking for an exception to be made because of his service record.

The officer looked at it and said: “*Just tear it up and we will forget it.*” He refused.

His fight to stay in the U.S. Air Force after coming out became a cause that the gay community rallied around.

LGBT Pride Month

His case was covered in newspaper and magazine articles throughout the country, numerous television interviews, and in a television movie.



His photograph appeared on the cover of the September 8, 1975, issue of Time magazine, making him a symbol for thousands of gay and lesbian service members and the LGBT community.

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In his last public speech, Matlovich said, “...*I want you to look at the flag, our rainbow flag, and I want you to look at it with pride in your heart, because we too have a dream. And what is our dream? Ours is more than an American dream. It's a universal dream. And our mission is to reach out and teach people to love, and not to hate.*”

On June 22, 1988, less than a month before his 45th birthday, he died beneath a large photo of Martin Luther King, Jr. in his hospital room.

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Designed by San Francisco artist Gilbert Baker in 1978, the rainbow flag is a symbol of LGBT pride and LGBT social movements. The colors reflect the diversity of the LGBT community, and the flag is often used as a symbol of gay pride in LGBT rights marches.

Baker served in the U.S. Army from 1970 to 1972 and was stationed in San Francisco at the beginning of the gay rights movement.

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After his honorable discharge from the military, he taught himself to sew.

The most common variant consists of six stripes, with the colors red (life), orange (healing), yellow (sunlight), green (nature), blue (serenity), and violet (spirit). The flag is commonly flown horizontally, with the red stripe on top, as it would be in a natural rainbow.

LGBT Pride Month

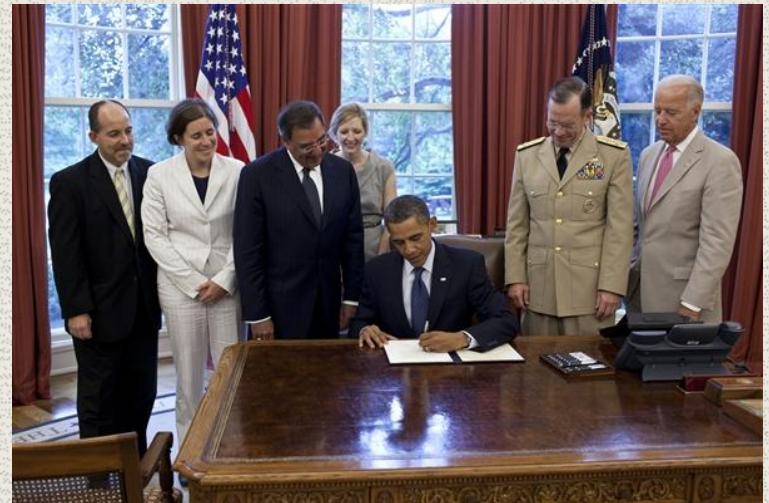
On June 1, 2009, President Barack Obama issued Proclamation No. 8387 for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Pride Month.

In this proclamation the President pointed to the contributions made by LGBT Americans both in promoting equal rights to all regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. He ended the proclamation by calling upon the people of the United States to “*turn back discrimination and prejudice everywhere it exists.*”

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On December 22, 2010, the “Don't Ask, Don't Tell” (DADT) Repeal Act became law.

Certification occurred in July 2011, and full implementation of the Act occurred in September 2011. LGB military members can now serve openly, with honor and integrity.



LGBT Pride Month



In 2012, Army Reserve officer Tammy Smith was promoted to Brigadier General. She also publicly acknowledged her sexuality, making her the first general officer to come out while still serving.

“All of those facts are irrelevant,” she said. “What is relevant is upholding Army values and the responsibility this carries.”

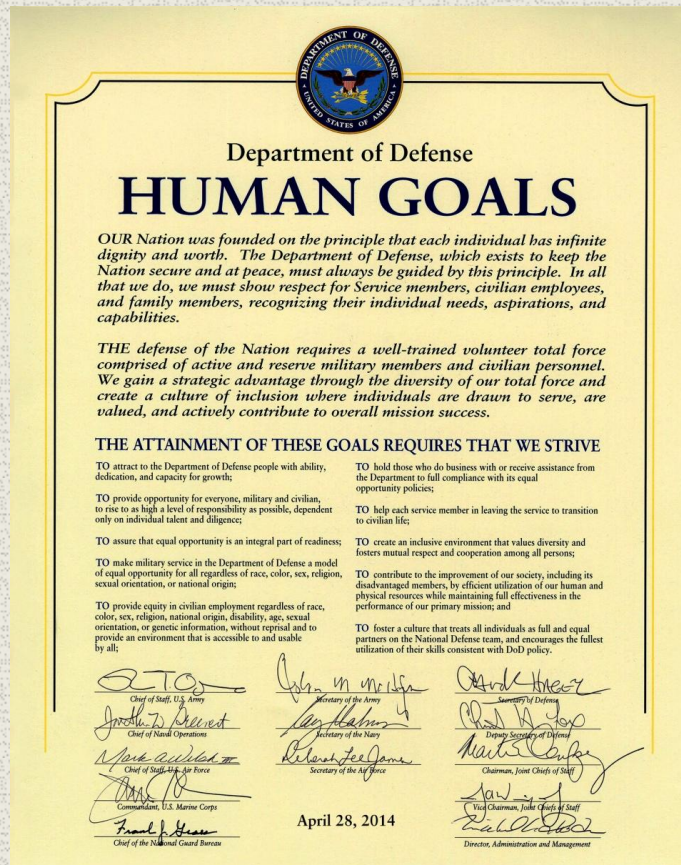
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But Smith's pinning ceremony marked an important milestone for gay rights advocates, giving the movement its most senior public military figure.

Today she serves as the Deputy Chief of Staff of the Army Reserve.

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On April 28, 2014, the Pentagon released an update to the DoD Human Goals Charter, which for the first time included language related to sexual orientation in the section dealing with the military.

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Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Army General Martin E. Dempsey noted at the signing, that 67 years ago in June, President Harry S. Truman spoke about civil rights and human freedom. Particularly the necessity for the federal government to remain a friendly, vigilant defender of the rights and equalities of all Americans.

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Effective March 27, 2015, the Family and Medical Leave Act, or FMLA, extended coverage to all legally married same-sex couples to take FMLA leave to provide care for their spouse.

In addition to serious health conditions of the employee, qualifying events include the care of a spouse or child with a serious health condition, and leave due to a spouse's covered military service.

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Previously, the definition of “spouse” under FMLA was defined by the state law where the employee resided. In February 2015, the Department of Labor issued a Final Rule to revise the definition to encompass legally married same-sex couples, regardless of where they live or work.

The definition is no longer focused on an employee’s “state of residence” but instead the “place of celebration,” which is the location where the marriage was entered into.

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The new rule will also extend coverage to allow eligible employees to take FMLA leave to care for the children or parents of the employee's same-sex spouse.

The rule does not extend coverage to civil unions, whether between a man and woman or a same-sex couple.

For information about the military family leave provisions of the FMLA, visit:

<http://www.dol.gov/whd/fmla/finalrule/MilitaryFAQs.pdf>

LGBT Pride Month

Diversity and inclusion are readiness imperatives; we rely on our diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and expertise to enable us to address the complex challenges of the global security environment.



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Diversity is more than race, gender, and ethnicity—among other things, it means diversity of thought, ability, background, language, culture, and skill.

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